

Challenges and Response to Distance Education During Covid-19: The Christian State Institute of Ambon Experience

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ABSTRACT

The Ambon Christian State Institute (Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Ambon) began distance learning in April 2020, after Indonesian government through Minister of Education and Culture release circular letter officially number 2,3 of 2020 concerning online learning and working from home as a measure to prevent spread corona virus disease (covid-19). This paper investigates the challenges and responses to the implementation decision of distance learning at the Ambon State Christian Institute (IAKN) campus. Just like other Universities in Various places, distance learning is the first experience at IAKN Ambon. therefore it contained number challenges starting from the infrastructure immediacy to lecturers and students themselves of readiness face to the policy. However strategic steps were taken in response to this decision. The result of adjustment to distance education process at IAKN Ambon show that learning in the even semester 2019-2020 can run properly, there are progress and success of distance learning that are very encouraging. In a short period of time, IAKN Ambon can improve it through the creation and use an E-Learning application that integrates learning and assessment process. In addition to the success as mentioned above, it turn out there are many challenges that should be considered and worked the utilization of the technology in order to make distance learning successful, besides the content and learning methods that must be kept updated. On this occasion, we will discuss what the experience at IAKN Ambon was like.

Keywords

Distance education, challenge, response, IAKN Ambon Figure

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Introduction

The emergency due to the 2019 pandemic corona virus disease (Covid-19) which started in Wuhan China (Mahase, 2020; Shi et.al., 2020) has changed the world order including the culture of education. Higher education in Indonesia is the same as tertiary institutions in other parts of the world that have not previously implemented education with an online system or in this paper it is called distance education, implemented to carry out distance education, if nothing is carried out independently and discarded. The same things were done by the Ambon State Christian Institute (IAKN). Until the beginning of the even semester 2019-2020, the learning system in the undergraduate program at IAKN Ambon still uses face-to-face in class, but in the middle of this semester, there was a change in policy by the State due to the 2019 global corona virus disease pandemic which has hit 215 countries in the world.

The Government of the Republic of Indonesia through the Ministry of Education and Culture issued Circular Fiber Number 4 of 2020, concerning the Implementation of the 2019 Coronavirus Disease Emergency Education and was followed by Circular Number 15 of 2020 concerning Guidelines for Learning from Home during the Covid-19 pandemic. This policy requires schools and universities in Indonesia to be able to conduct online or online learning as a substitute for learning systems outside of the network (offline) or offline. Indeed, long before the Covid-19 pandemic, several leading universities in Indonesia had implemented an online learning system or at least combined online and offline learning systems as needed, but not many

universities implemented distance learning as it is now. IAKN Ambon itself has a plan to build an online learning system and will be implemented in a balanced way with face-to-face learning in class in the academic year 2021/2022. Steps in that direction have also been taken by conducting online learning training at the State University of Malang which involved elements of higher education leaders, deans, postgraduate directors, as well as the chairperson and secretary of the college senate. The follow-up is that the IAKN Ambon postgraduate program in the even semester of the 2018/2019 academic year has carried out a combination of online and offline learning, while the undergraduate program is awaiting the construction of the structured system that has been proposed for 2021, but the covid-19 pandemic has accelerated its implementation.

The issues that are the focus of this study are the factors that affect distance learning, especially at IAKN Ambon during the mid-semester transition period of the 2019-2020 academic year, when the distance learning policy was implemented because Indonesia became one country in the world which became a distribution area. covid-19, and designated as a non-natural and social disaster. There are two assumptions in this study, first, the design of certain applications including distance learning solutions for human life in this era still needs to be developed while still paying attention to the target user groups. Second, there are a number of factors that influence the use of technology and its application in the distance learning process. Whether the application is aware of it or not, it always has strengths and weaknesses in its implementation by users. Along with the use of a human resource application and the accessibility of